

HOUSEKEEPING FOR TWO

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To board or to keep house—that is the question. If you have boarded and found it neither cheap nor pleasing, you may like to try the alternative of keeping house on a small scale.

The shops furnish several kinds of cooking apparatus suitable for light housekeeping. You may begin with one alcohol lamp, or a chafing-dish and an extra lamp, or a two-burner alcohol stove. You may have a blue-flame kerosene oil stove, a gas plate with one, two or three burners and an oven, or a gas range with four top burners, an oven and a broiler.

You will have better success if your cooking utensils are suited in size to the amounts you are going to cook. Here are suggestions for a small outfit:

Quart saucepan	Teaspoon	Strainer
Pint saucepan	Tablespoon	Two pie tins
Cover for each	Fork	Baking-dish
Small frying-pan	Measuring cup	Dishpan
Pint double-boiler	Dover egg-beater	Soap-dish
Two-quart earthen bowl	Small tea-kettle	Two dish cloths
Paring knife	Pint teapot	Four dish towels
Palette knife	Quart coffee-pot	Vegetable brush
Wooden spoon	Toaster	

If you are beginning on a very small scale, you will omit a number of these utensils. If you are doing it more elaborately, you will add several conveniences to these. A baby ice-cream freezer will freeze two dishes of ice-cream in ten minutes, and will make a variety of delicious desserts. A potato ricer makes the mashing of potatoes much easier and quicker. A meat-grinder or a chopping-bowl and knife will allow you some good things not otherwise easy to get.

Now for suggestions for a first day's menu, which, of course, must be modified to fit individual circumstances.

BREAKFAST

Cream of wheat with dates		Scrambled eggs
Toast	Coffee	Strawberries

LUNCHEON OR SUPPER

Potato salad	Cream cheese
Bread and butter	Tea

DINNER

Veal cutlet	Green peas
Boiled rice	Strawberry short-cake

Rule number one about cereals is, never believe what the packages say about the length of time to cook them. They cannot be properly cooked in fifteen or twenty minutes. If you don't like to get up early, cook your cereal the night before and reheat it, or do without it.

Cereal. One-quarter cup cream of wheat, one-quarter teaspoon salt, one and one-quarter cups of water, two dates. Bring water to boiling point in upper part of double boiler. Add salt. Pour cereal into boiling water, stirring steadily. Let boiling continue until mixture thickens, or about five minutes. Stir only enough to prevent sticking. Place upper part of boiler in lower part, which should be half-full of boiling water. Cook forty-five minutes, without stirring. About ten minutes before it is done, stir in carefully two dates which have been washed, stoned and cut in small pieces.

Coffee. Four tablespoons ground coffee, three cups boiling water, one tablespoon beaten white of egg. Rinse coffee-pot with hot water. Stir beaten egg into coffee, and add just enough cold water to moisten coffee and make the grains cling together. Put into coffee-pot, pour on boiling water. Bring to boiling point and boil one minute. Let stand in warm place five minutes before serving.

See that your coffee-pot is thoroughly washed, rinsed and aired each time after using it. Poor coffee is oftener due to unclean, ill-smelling coffee-pots than to bad materials or wrong methods of making.

Scrambled Eggs. Two eggs, one tablespoon butter, two tablespoons water, few grains salt. Scrambled eggs should be a soft, creamy, tender mixture when done, not a tough, hard mass. This is the way to get them so. Beat the eggs slightly, enough to blend yolks and whites. Add water, one tablespoon for each egg, and salt. Put butter in the saucepan, melt, but do not brown; turn in egg mixture. Cook over low fire, lifting from the bottom of the pan as the mixture cooks, until the whites are set.

If you have too hot a fire, the egg will be tough. If the mixture is stirred too hard and fast, the egg will be broken up in fine pieces, which spoils the appearance of the dish. It is safer to set the saucepan in hot water while cooking.

Toast. Cut stale bread in even slices about one-third inch thick. Dry in oven, then toast each side a golden brown.

Now there are two different tastes in the matter of toast. One is for toast crisp on the outside only, and soft inside. The other is for toast crisp all the way through. The latter is undoubtedly better digested, because more likely to be well masticated. But if you insist upon having the soft kind, don't dry the bread much before toasting, and toast it quickly. For the crisp sort, the bread should be well-dried before toasting, or else toasted slowly over a moderate fire.

Strawberries. Strawberries are best cleaned by dipping a few at a time in a dish of water, to remove sand and grit. Then remove hulls and drain in a strainer. Serve with powdered sugar and cream or sugar alone.

While you are eating breakfast, you can have some potatoes boiling. These should be washed, pared and put into boiling water, plenty of water to cover the potatoes and keep them covered while they are cooking. Let them boil gently so that they may not break on the surface. They should cook until they can be pierced easily with a fork. But do not overcook them when they are to be used for salad. Add salt to potatoes five or ten minutes before taking them up. As soon as they are done, drain off the water, and shake the kettle gently over the fire for a minute or two, so that they may be thoroughly dried. Let them cool, and then they are ready when you have a chance to make your salad.

Potato Salad. Two medium-sized boiled potatoes, one small cucumber, two slices onion. Cut the potatoes and cucumber into half-inch dice, and the onion into very fine pieces. Combine with the following:

Cooked Dressing. One tablespoon flour, one tablespoon butter, one-half cup milk, one-half teaspoon salt, one-eighth teaspoon pepper, one-half teaspoon mustard, one-quarter teaspoon sugar, one egg yolk, two tablespoons vinegar. Melt butter, add flour and cook together without browning three minutes. Add milk and bring to boiling point, stirring constantly. Remove from fire and add beaten yolk of egg. Cook below boiling point two minutes. Take from fire and add vinegar gradually, then seasonings. This should be a smooth, creamy dressing.

To combine salad, mix the vegetables and half the dressing in a bowl, tossing together lightly with a fork. Turn out on a serving dish, and pour over the rest of the dressing.

This salad may be varied by substituting celery for cucumber, and finely chopped green peppers for onion.

Tea. Two teaspoons black or one teaspoon green tea, two cups boiling water. Scald teapot, put in tea, pour on water, which must

be freshly boiled. Let stand in warm place, where it will not boil, three minutes. Pour into cups at once. Serve with milk and sugar, or a slice of lemon and sugar.

Veal Cutlet. One-half pound veal cutlet, two tablespoons butter, two tablespoons flour, one cup water, one-quarter teaspoon salt. Take off the outside skin from the cutlet, wipe with a cloth wrung out of cold water. Put half the butter in a frying pan; when hot, put in the cutlet, brown nicely on both sides. Lift out the meat, add remaining butter and flour, cook together until blended. Add water, bring to boiling point, stirring constantly. Return cutlet to pan and simmer gently until perfectly tender, from thirty to forty minutes.

Green Peas. One quart peas, one tablespoon butter, salt, pepper, water. Shell peas, wash quickly in cold water. Put in saucepan, add just enough boiling water to cover. Boil gently, *without* a cover, until tender, about twenty minutes. Five minutes before they are done, add salt and pepper, and just before serving, add butter. The water should be absorbed or evaporated by the time the peas are done, so that they need not be drained. If the water is poured off, much of the flavor of the peas is lost.

Boiled Rice. Two tablespoons rice, one pint water, one teaspoon salt, one-quarter cup cream. Wash rice in cold water. Have pint of water boiling, and drop in rice slowly. Lift the kernels with a fork to prevent them from sticking to the bottom of the kettle, until they are dancing in the water. Then let the rice cook, without stirring, about thirty minutes. The kernels should be large, soft and transparent. When done, turn the rice into a strainer, and let cold water run through it freely. Return to the kettle, add cream and reheat carefully.

Strawberry Short-cake. One-half cup pastry flour, one tablespoon sugar, one teaspoon baking powder, one-eighth teaspoon salt, one tablespoon beaten egg, four teaspoons butter, four teaspoons milk. Mix and sift dry ingredients. Work in butter lightly with tips of fingers. Add egg, then milk. Toss out on a floured pan, and pat out with a knife until half an inch thick. Cut into two rounds, and bake in a quick oven until nicely browned, about twelve or fifteen minutes. Split each biscuit, pile strawberries which have been standing for a little time covered with sugar on the lower half of biscuit, put on the upper half, pile on more berries and cover with whipped cream.

Be careful in adding the milk to the other ingredients in the short-cake dough, not to make the dough too soft to handle. Flour differs in the amount of moisture it will take up, and it may not be necessary to use all of the milk in this recipe.

Note.—All proportions in these rules are based upon *level* measurements of tablespoons, teaspoons and cups.